

LESSON 96: WORDS PRONOUNCED ALIKE • *THERE* vs. *THEIR*

1. COPY CAREFULLY • 2. FIND HOMOPHONES • 3. USE IN SENTENCES

Rule of Homophones: There and their sound exactly alike (/ðɛəɾ/), but have different spellings and meanings!

• There tells *where* (place or pointing: “over *there*”, “*there* is”).

• Their shows *possession* (belonging to them: “*their* books”, “*their* bells”).

Sound: /ðɛəɾ/
thâr

EUGENE FIELD (1850–1895)

MODEL 1

There is one little dream of a beautiful drum, —
There is one little dream of a big sugar-plum.

Copy lines carefully:

EDITH M. THOMAS (1854–1925)

MODEL 2

There the flowers are blue,
And so is the dew
That hangs in their bells.

Copy lines carefully:

ALICE CARY (1820–1871) • CLASSIC MORAL MAXIM

MODEL 3

There is nothing so kingly as kindness.

Copy maxim carefully:

Wheeler's Socratic Grammar Inquiries: Read each question and write your answer neatly:

3 Concept Checks

1. What do you call the things which *they* have?

Hint: Possession (belonging to them)

2. What word do you use in speaking of *that* place?

Hint: Location (in that place)

3. How many lessons on this page? Fill in the blank: “_____ are two.”

Hint: Sentence starter

Exercise 4 • Original Sentence Composition: Use *there* and *their* in sentences of your own:

Target: 3 Sentences

Line 1 (Write a sentence using *there* for a place or pointer):

Line 2 (Write a sentence using *their* showing ownership):

Line 3 (Challenge: Use both *there* and *their* in one sentence):

PEDAGOGICAL STANDARD: HOMOPHONE DIFFERENTIATION • THERE vs. THEIR (/ðɛər/)

MASTER KEY

1. Homophone Orthographic & Grammatical Matrix				Comparative Analysis
Word	Pronunciation	Part of Speech	Semantic Function	Mnemonic & Etymological Anchor
there	/ðɛər/ (thār)	Adverb / Expletive Pronoun	Designates a place ("over there") or introduces a clause ("there is").	Contains HERE : <i>t</i> -HERE is a place, answering the question <i>Where?</i> Old English <i>þær</i> .
their	/ðɛər/ (thār)	Possessive Determiner	Shows possession belonging to <i>them</i> ("their bells", "their things").	Contains HEIR : An <i>heir</i> inherits property! From Old Norse <i>þeira</i> .
they're	/ðɛər/ (thār)	Contraction	Contraction of <i>they are</i> ("they're coming").	Has an apostrophe (') showing where the letter <i>a</i> was omitted.

2. Wheeler's Socratic Inquiries • Complete Teacher Answer Key

1901 Socratic Method

Q1: What do you call the things which *they* have?
► Expected Student Answer: *Their (thār) things.*
Teacher Talking Points: Emphasize ownership. When something belongs to *them*, we spell it t-h-e-i-r. Remind students that *their* answers the question "Whose things?"

Q2: What word do you use in speaking of *that* place?
► Expected Student Answer: *There.*
Teacher Talking Points: Point across the room. We say "Look over *there*!" Notice the spelling: it ends in -h-e-r-e. *Here* and *there* are both words for places!

Q3: How many lessons on this page? Fill in the blank: "_____ are two."
► Expected Student Answer: *There are two.*
Teacher Talking Points: Here *There* acts as an introductory expletive subject. Notice capitalization: as the first word of the sentence, it must always begin with a capital T.

3. Wheeler-Aligned Decodable Dictation Sentences

Administer Orally

Sentence 1: "There are three little birds singing high in the summer air."
[Focus: *There* (expletive), *air* (Lesson 94 digraph)]

Sentence 2: "The children hung their warm coats over there by the door."
[Focus: *their* (possession) vs. *there* (place) in single sentence]

Sentence 3: "There is true joy when little girls share their fresh bread."
[Focus: *There* (pointer), *share* (caret â), *their* (possession), *bread* (Lesson 95 ea)]

Sentence 4: "We stood over there beneath the elm and watched their playful game."
[Focus: *there* (place), *elm* (Lesson 95 monosyllable), *their* (possession)]

4. Literary Profiles & Diagnostic Rubric

Author Notes

Author Context:

- Eugene Field (1850–1895): Master of musical juvenile verse; his couplet illustrates the repetitive cadence of introductory *There is*.
- Edith M. Thomas (1854–1925): Prominent American lyric poet born in Ohio; her tercet masterfully contrasts *There* (line 1) with *their* (line 3) in a unified natural image.
- Alice Cary (1820–1871): Acclaimed American poet whose moral proverb ("There is nothing so kingly as kindness") instills character alongside orthography.

Diagnostic Common Errors:

- Substituting *their* for introductory *there* ("Their is a book" ✖).
- Substituting *there* for possessive *their* ("They took there coats" ✖).